

AURIOL PARK

MANAGEMENT PLAN 2017 - 2021



Prepared By

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council



1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Executive Summary enables readers to understand the main ideas of the management plan. The summary follows the guidance provided by the Green Flag Award desktop assessment. The aims and objectives of the management plan follow the Green Flag Award judging criteria. The executive summary, together with the main plan and the appendices provide details of the management of the park.

The Auriol Park Management Plan covers a five year period from 2017 – 2021.

Parts 2 – 4 explain the purpose of the plan, an overview of how we manage and maintain the park, and records the key features of the past and present.

Part 5 addresses the key criteria set by the Green Flag Award

5.1 – A Welcoming Place, states information relating to access, signs and facilities.

5.2 – Healthy, Safe and Secure, gives details of our Health & Safety Policies, the Ranger Service, emergency procedures and contacts, park security including CCTV. This section also discusses the steps we take to curtail irresponsible dog ownership. We discuss how we work with the Police and outlines the byelaws that apply to Auriol Park.

5.3 – Clean and Well Maintained, in this section we look at how the maintenance work is scheduled and carried out by the Streetcare department and how the quality of work is monitored. There is particular reference to litter, graffiti, and grounds maintenance. This section also focuses on the maintenance of the pavilion and arboriculture maintenance, both of which are provided by other departments of the Council.

5.4 - Sustainability relates to environmental sustainability and details our aims in relation to use of organic material and recycling. In this section, we detail how we use pesticides and our policy not to use peat. In general, we take our guidance from the Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Environmental Policy.

5.5 – Conservation and Heritage, looks at Agenda 21 and Epsom & Ewell’s Biodiversity/Sustainability Plans. We also reference the Council’s Green Spaces Strategy and the Green Infrastructure. This section also explains the steps we take to protect and encourage ecology and wildlife in Auriol Park.

5.6 – Community Involvement is an area in which we are exceptionally lucky to have the support of a hands-on Friends Group. Auriol Park Friends provide an additional resource that helps maintain and enhance the park for the enjoyment of the entire community. This section also discusses our relationships with our external partners such as the Football Federation and the Bowling Club. Community Involvement also extends to Events in the Park and Auriol Park is the venue for a large annual community event held by the local Resident’s Association.

5.7 – Marketing, although we do not ‘market’ the park in the commercial sense, we do find out what people want from this space by canvassing their opinions via a Visitor Survey. The point of the survey is to find out what people think about the current state of park and what they would like to see in the future. This important piece of consultation is vital in helping us plan for the next five years and the results feed into Action Plan, found in Appendix A.

Appendix A – The Auriol Park Action Plan is possibly the most important part of the plan as it details how we would like to manage the park over the next five years. Although some of the items detailed in the Action Plan are aspirational and will require specific funding to achieve, we feel it is important to include all items so that we can investigate suitable funding options as they become available.

Appendix B – Provides a copy of the Green Spaces Strategy.

2 INTRODUCTION

Auriol Park is a designated King George V Playing Field situated in Worcester Park, in the Northern end of the borough within the Auriol Ward. It is approximately 14.5 acres in size and has vehicle access off of Salisbury Road but it also has gated access from Thorndon Gardens and Chestnut Avenue. The land was previously owned by Auriol Barker and he sold it to Epsom & Ewell Council on 8th November 1934 and is currently managed by their team of park rangers.

The plan will identify how Auriol Park is managed using the green flag assessment criteria. The management plan addresses the good practices and recommendations suggested by the Green Flag judges over the past eight years along with further opportunities. Auriol Park has never been entered or awarded Green Flag but by producing a management plan that reflects the standard for Green Flag awards, this means that Auriol Park could be entered for the award in the future.

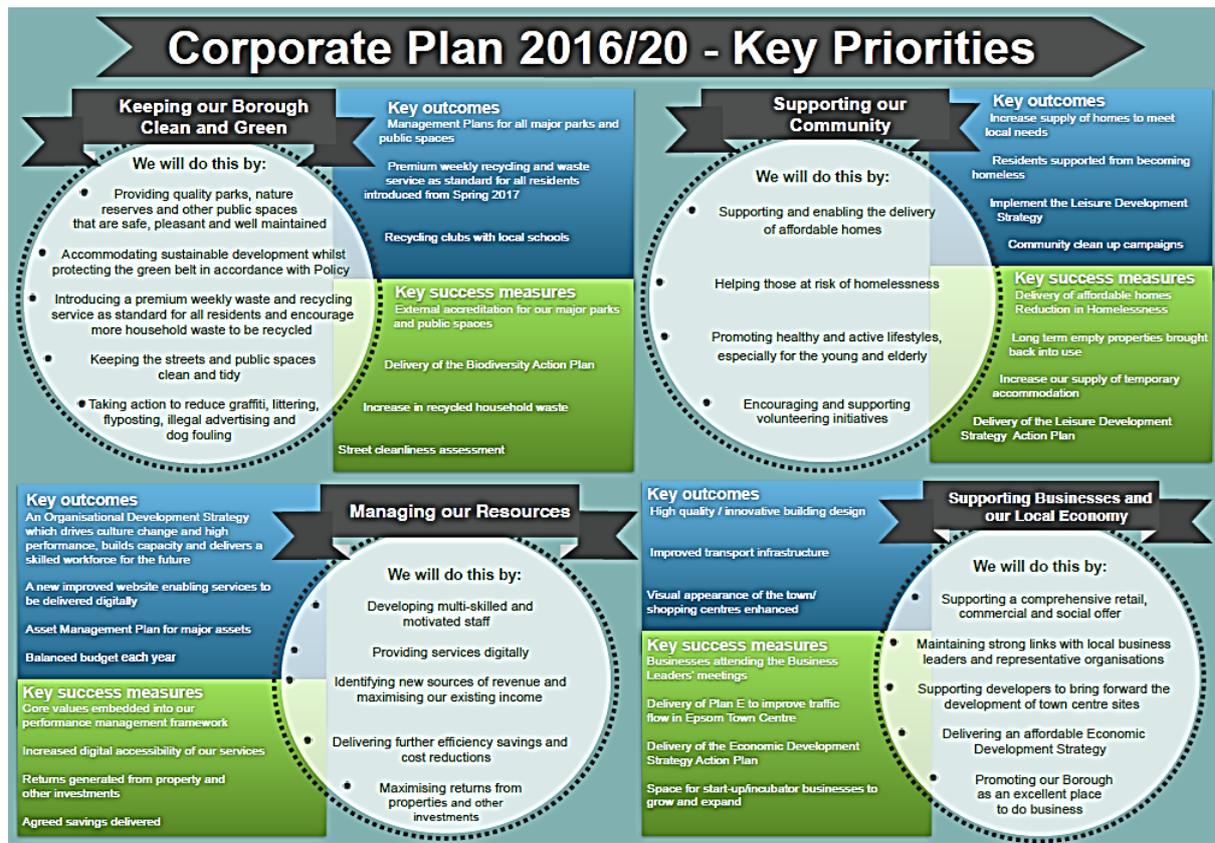
2.1 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of the management plan is to:

- Ensure that the objectives of management and maintenance are documented
- To identify the resources required to manage and maintain the park
- To assess priorities and challenges for future action
- To encourage and support community involvement
- To promote and market the park
- To monitor and review changes that occur in the park

The management plan has been written to cover a 5-year period. It is a working document that brings together all information relating to Auriol Park. It will be updated, and revised on an annual basis as part of the Green Flag award scheme process. The plan will serve as a benchmark against which delivery and performance objectives can be measured.

2.2 EPSOM & EWELL BOROUGH COUNCILS KEY PRIORITIES



2.3 THE VISION FOR AURIOL PARK

‘Provide a safe, attractive and sustainable environment for the benefit of all park users now and in the future’

To achieve this vision we have incorporated the key criteria set out in the Green Flag award scheme as a national benchmark for quality standards for public parks.

2.4 KEY OBJECTIVES

- To ensure the effective implementation of both financial and staffing resources to deliver a high level of quality management.
- Positively welcome people into the park, in terms of both physical and social access.
- Ensure a healthy, safe and secure experience for park users.
- Provide a well maintained and clean park.
- Improve the environmental quality and sustainability of practices carried out in the park.
- Maintain the restored historic landscape character, whilst ensuring provision for contemporary users.
- Provide opportunities to increase community use and involvement, particularly through events, education and interpretation.
- Ensure effective promotion of the park as a community resource.

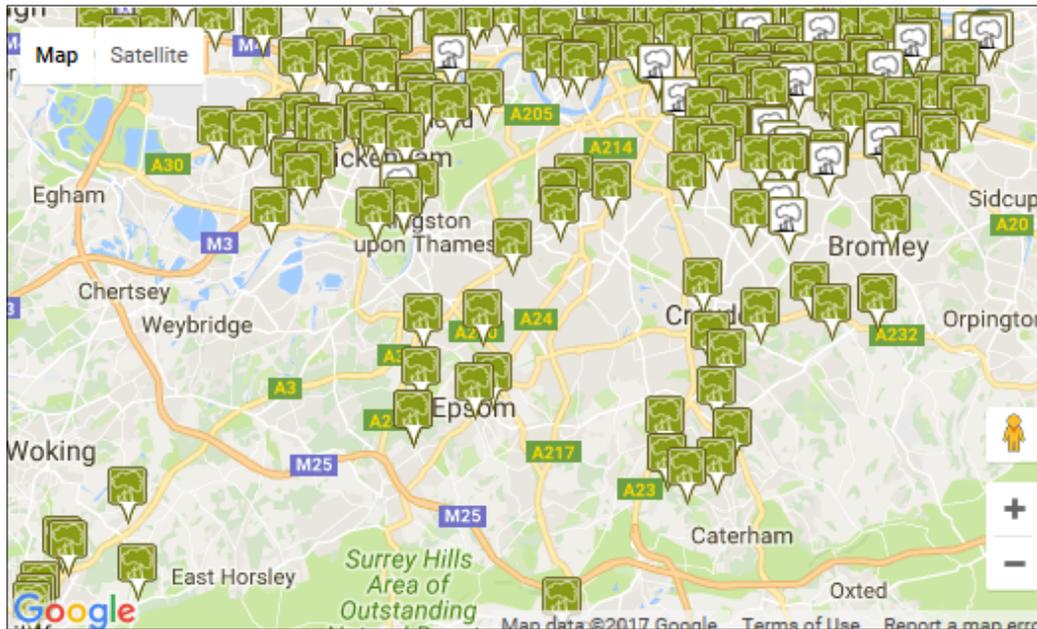


Figure 1 Distribution of Green Flag parks in the South East region

2.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council work to an annual maintenance schedule involving the grounds maintenance team, street cleansing team and ranger service. These three teams work in unison to provide a safe, clean and enjoyable environment for all who wish to use Auriol Park. Epsom & Ewell Borough Council have strived to ensure its parks and facilities are open to all who wish to use them. In Auriol Park there is good disabled access throughout. To ensure work is completed to council specification there are policies in place for any issues that arise. When working on public areas such as parks and open spaces these issues tend to be litter (including drug paraphernalia), dog fouling, graffiti and vandalism of equipment. These policies ensure that the council can continue to keep its parks and open spaces as clean and safe as possible for its users. Regular meetings with the Friends Of Auriol Park ensure open communication channels are maintained, allowing the council to respond to any problems that may arise but more importantly to try and prevent these problems arising in the future.

2.6 LOCATION OF AURIOL PARK



Figure 2 Location of Auriol Park and the surrounding roads

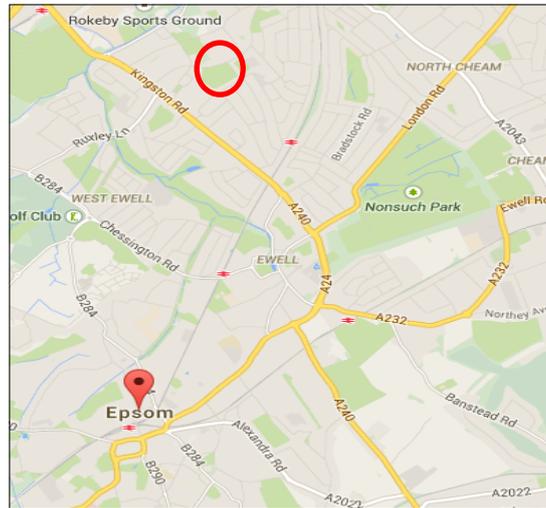


Figure 3 Location of Auriol Park in relation to Epsom Town Centre



Figure 4 Location of Epsom in relation to London

3 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 SITE OVERVIEW

Address

Auriol Park
Salisbury Road
Worcester Park
Surrey
KT4 7DD

Size

14.5 Hectares

Access

Salisbury Road
Thorndon Gardens
Chestnut Avenue

Ownership

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council

Management & Maintenance

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council

Facilities

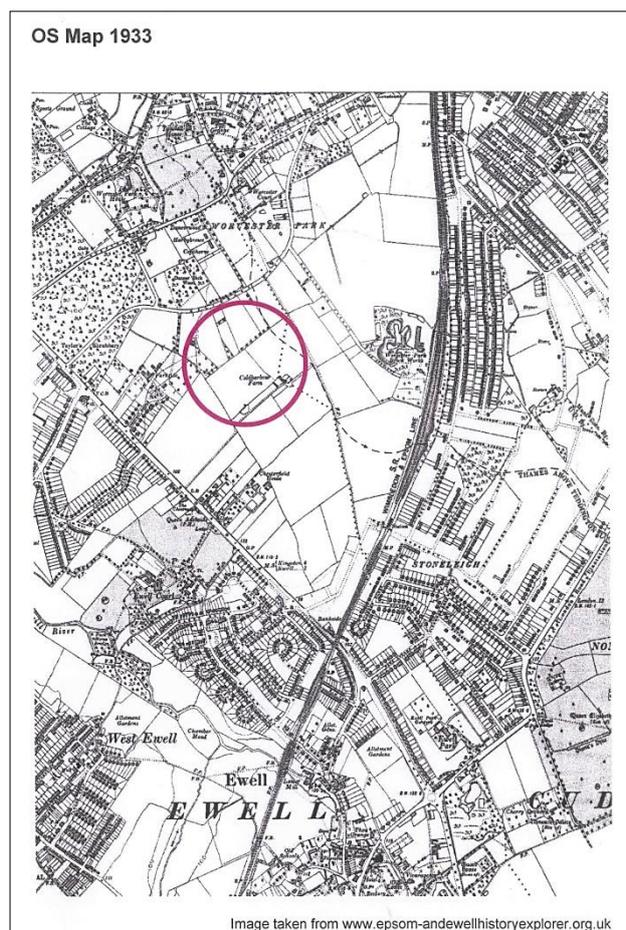
Multiuse games area (MUGA)
Bowling Green
Pavillion
Under 12's children's playground
2 Full-sized and 2 mini football pitches
Sports changing facilities
Rooms for hire
Tennis courts (hard surfaced)

3.2 HISTORIC CONTEXT

Auriol Park is situated in Stoneleigh; a residential area of Epsom & Ewell that is centred around Stoneleigh railway station and Stoneleigh Broadway. Much of the area was just open fields prior to the 1930's when most of the estate was developed.

In the 17th Century, the area where Stoneleigh now lies was part of the Great Park of Nonsuch Palace. The park stretched from the palace itself to the edge of the modern border of the area. In 1731 the Nonsuch estate was sold off and the Great Park, by then known as Worcester Park, was divided into farmland.

The area which is now Auriol Park was sold in 1870 as plots for “substantial housing” but these were never built. Auriol Barker was a solicitor who moved to the rapidly growing suburb of Worcester Park in the 1890s. He threw himself into the sporting interests there and founded the Worcester Park Polo Club. He continued to play for the club over the next thirty years and Auriol Park was the field on which he kept the polo ponies. In 1934, when he was 85 and getting ready to slow down a little, he sold the land to the District Council on 8 November for the price of £5,197; approx. £324,034 in today's money (*Parks in the Past, Bourne Hall*). The land was initially used as storage by the local coal merchant and then as allotments during the Second World War.



Between the world wars, demand for houses on commuter routes into London meant that this area of the borough was built up rapidly. The extent of urbanisation can be seen in figure 5. This was not going to be the fate for this Auriol Park as it was one of the 471 open spaces in England to be dedicated as a King George V Playing Field. While plans were being drawn up for a park, the 14.5 acres were grazed by a local firm who also agreed to roll and harrow the land and the playing field was opened in 1958.

The new park was laid out for sports with three cricket pitches, three football pitches, eight hard tennis courts, a bowling green, and an eighteen-hole putting green, together with a children's playground, a central pavilion and a lodge for the Keeper – all at an estimated cost of £17,000. In the 1960s a groundsman's lodge and garages were added, and the pavilion and children's playground were renewed (*Parks in the Past, Bourne Hall*).

Figure 5 OS map from 1933 showing the location of Auriol Park and the surrounding urbanisation

3.2.2 KING GEORGE'S FIELDS FOUNDATION



On 30 January 1936 upon the death of King George V, the then Lord Mayor of the City of London set up a committee to consider what form a national memorial to the King should take. In March 1936, the committee decided that there should be a statue in London and a philanthropic scheme of specific character that would benefit the whole country and be associated with King George V's name. As a result in the November of that year, the King George's Fields Foundation was constituted by Trust Deed to give effect to the scheme.

The aim of the Foundation was "to promote and to assist in the establishment throughout the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland of playing fields for the use and enjoyment of the people every such playing field to be styled 'King George's Field' and to be distinguished by heraldic panels or other appropriate tablet medallion or inscription commemorative of His Late Majesty and of a design approved by the Administrative Council."

The trust deed defined a 'Playing Field' as "any open space used for the purpose of outdoor games, sports and pastimes."



The project was to be a flexible one, focusing on urban areas, but not exclusively so, and carried out in each locality according to its requirements. Each field would have a distinctive uniform tablet as an appropriate visible commemoration of George V.

This was considered to be as the King would have wished, particularly in the service rendered to youth through providing for them an environment and opportunity for open air exercise, for the benefit of individual well-being and the general welfare of the nation (*Fields In Trust.org*).

Auriol park was one of the initial 471 parks across England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland made a King George playing field and the plaques can be found on the entrance at Thorndon gardens.

Figure 6 The lion and unicorn plaques found on King George Playing Fields

3.2.3 AURIOL PARK TODAY

Today, the general layout of the park remains the same but there have been many changes. There is no longer a cricket pitch or putting green; instead there is a bowling green and five football pitches of various sizes, suitable for junior as well as senior teams. Funding from the National Lottery paid for a new multi-use games area and in late 2014 the tennis courts were completely refurbished after having been in an unusable condition for a few years. The improved pavilion, which in addition to all the usual facilities has a separate room that can be hired

for private functions. The park is the home ground for the Auriol Bowling Club, the Auriol Park Bowling Club (Ladies) and Epsom Eagles Football Club. Auriol is a recreational park rather than an ornamental garden; it has some beautiful trees and shrubs but no flower beds (*Parks in the Past, Bourne Hall*). The section of the park that has the pavilion and children's playground has a much higher elevation to the rest of the park, and as such has a view towards the west that is clear from tall buildings and can treat park users to some beautiful sunsets.



Figure 7 Sunset in Auriol Park, March 2014

4 MANAGEMENT

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council is responsible for the maintenance of all public grounds in the Borough. The In-house Operational Services Streetcare department provides grounds maintenance, public realm maintenance, graffiti removal and cleansing operations to all public parks and open spaces. Whilst the Ranger Service are responsible for patrolling and managing these sites.

The work included within Auriol Park covers grass cutting, pruning and planting and also clearance of litter, building and infrastructure maintenance, security, events and other aspects of park management. Maintenance functions are output based as far as possible – this means that work is carried out to a specified standard, rather than the way in which the service is to be provided.

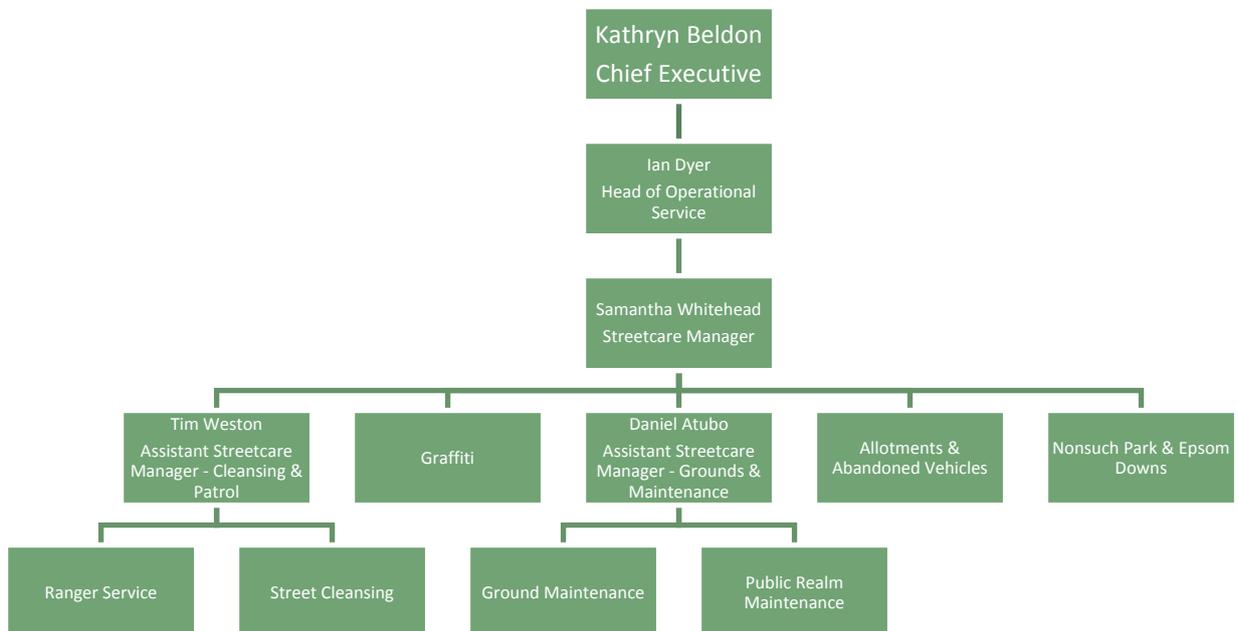


Figure 8 Streetcare Organisational Chart

5 AURIOL PARK IN RELATION TO GREEN FLAG CRITERIA

5.1 A WELCOMING PLACE

5.1.1 ACCESS

Auriol Park is located within an urban area and is served by the nearby Stoneleigh railway station and a number of local bus routes that stop off of Salisbury Road.

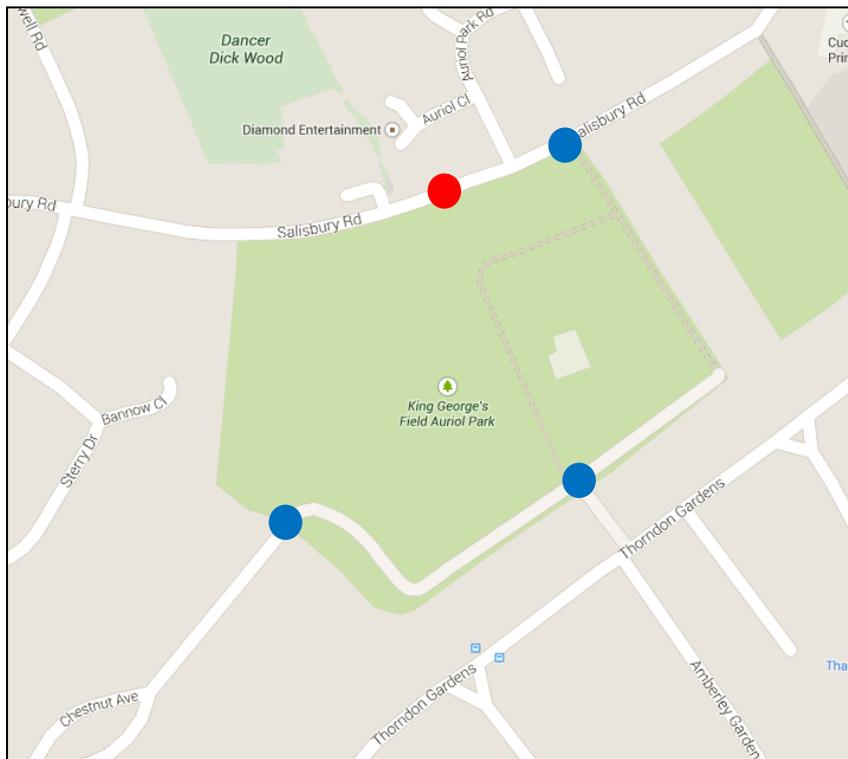
There are four entrances to Auriol Park with two that can be considered main entrances. The first is off of Salisbury Road and is vehicle friendly with a large carpark that can facilitate a high volume of vehicles; there is also parking by the pavilion for those who require better access. This entrance provides an open and welcoming feeling when entering the park with brick pillars and a clear open view of the park, as can be seen in figure 10. The other main entrance is located off of Thorndon Gardens and can be seen in figure 11. The brick pillars bare the plaques of the Lion and Unicorn in memorial of King George V. Although this entrance appears to be vehicle friendly, it is for emergency access only. The last two entrances are pedestrian only and are located off of Salisbury Road and Chestnut Avenue. The combination of these entrances give access to the park from all sides as can be seen in figure 12. Due to the layout and location of the gates there is very little possibility for shrubbery to overtake the entrances and wherever possible it is cut back as the council understands that shrubbery provides excellent cover for people who wish to do harm to park users.



Figure 8 Main entrance to Auriol Park (Google Maps)



Figure 9 Entrance from Thorndon Gardens displaying the King George V memorial plaques



Key

- - Main Vehicle Entrance
- - Pedestrian Entrance
- Authorised Vehicle Access only

Figure 10 Map Showing the Location of the Four Entrances to Auriol Park

5.1.2 SIGNAGE

Throughout the Borough, extensive work is carried out to keep all signs clean and legible. The most common problems faced by the maintenance team is graffiti. There is a team dedicated solely to working on the graffiti in the borough. It has been found that it was more beneficial to use signs with Perspex fronts. By using Perspex fronts on signs and noticeboards it is easier to clean away graffiti.

The types of signs that can be found in Auriol are dog fouling signs asking all dog walkers to pick up after their dog. These signs are found on nearly all of the lampposts and also stencilled on to the pavements. In the same context there are also signs asking the public to dispose of their litter in the litterbins provided. The bowlers have a dedicated sign at the main vehicle entrance directing the public to the pavilion and bowling green.

There are two main information boards, one at each entrance that can accommodate vehicles. They show a map of the ground, highlighting the entrances/exits, toilets and other facilities. As can be seen from figure 13 the boards have weathered over the years and are not up to date. After successful installation of new notice boards in Nonsuch Park, funding was secured in 2015 for a project to replace the uninformative notice boards in the main parks and replace them with engaging and informative boards.

The first two parks to receive these new boards were Rosebery Park and Alexandra Recreation Ground. The boards consist of a map showing the layout of the park and key features such as the playground and also 'you are here' points to help people new to the park orientate themselves to get around. The maps have been done in a cartoon style using bright colours and stylised images and was designed by Mary Gorton, an external graphic designer. As well as the map, there is a brief history of the park and the Councils 'Do's and Don'ts' whilst in the park which covers etiquettes around cycling and dog walking. Alongside the map is a locking pin board for Council use and if the 'Friends Of' wish to advertise their group or events. Figure 14 shows one of the boards from Rosebery Park and the boards for Auriol are due to be installed in Spring 2017.



Figure 11 Information Board by the Main Vehicle Entrance



Figure 14 Rosebery noticeboard and map in situ by Ashley Road

5.1.3 FACILITIES

As the list of facilities below would suggest, Auriol Park prides itself on the extensive facilities it provides to the community. The Council is continually working on 'providing something for everyone'.

Auriol Park is home to:

- 1 Multiuse games area (MUGA)
- 1 Bowling Green
- Pavilion
- Under 12's children's playground
- 2 Full-sized and 2 mini football pitches
- Sports changing facilities
- Rooms for hire
- 2 Tennis courts (hard surfaced)

Sports

The park is the home ground for the Auriol Bowling Club and the Auriol Park Bowling Club (Ladies), the club regularly holds open days where members of the public can try their hand at bowls. It is also the home ground for Stoneleigh Athletic Football Club; formed in 1972 they were one of the founding clubs in the Epsom and Ewell Youth League. As a Charter Standard Club all teams have a qualified coach and the teams range from Under 8 to Under 17 and seek to provide an opportunity for players of all abilities to play in a team, having several teams in some age groups, they also encourage girls to join the teams and have since had several girls playing in mixed teams and welcome all children who want to play football (*Stoneleigh Athletic FC*). Although it would be financially beneficial to try to get more teams using the pitches mid-week, it would compromise the quality of the pitches for those already contracted to use them. It is important that the grounds maintenance team continually provide a safe and enjoyable playing surface.

The tennis courts became in a state of disrepair and had to be closed to the public. Funding was secured and the tennis courts were completely regenerated in late 2014 and have once again become a great asset to the park as can be seen in figure 15. As the park is locked up at dark it was not necessary to provide lighting.

For the groups that have booked the use of the pavilion, most commonly it is the sporting teams. There are changing rooms for both home and away teams, shower facilities, toilets, a telephone, first aid kit, a function room, kitchen and fire safety equipment.

For a ground with limited size it hosts a remarkable amount of sporting and recreational facilities for the whole family.

Playground and Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)

The Childrens playground was refurbished in 2006 and the equipment was sourced from two suppliers: Hags Play Ltd and Sutcliffe Play and was installed by an external company: Playground Services. The MUGA was installed two years later in 2008 to replace the old basketball court, it was one of 5 projects in the borough that benefitted from £200,000 of National Lottery funding. The MUGA facilitates many sports including basketball, football and cricket.

Pavilion

The pavilion has several toilets which are accessible to the public if a Ranger is in the park. Due to graffiti and vandalism problems with public toilets in the area, it is not possible to leave them open full-time. During the

summer months when the park is at its busiest, the Ranger service regularly patrols the park. When they are in the park, any member of the public can request they open a toilet for them. There is also a first aid kit in the pavilion.



Figure 12 Hard Surfaced Tennis Court



Figure 13 Pictures showing main pavilion with access compliant with the disability discrimination act 1995



Figure 14 The multi-use games area (MUGA)



Figure 15 Children's Playground

5.2 HEALTHY, SAFE AND SECURE

5.2.1 HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

Training is issued when using new machinery and to new members of staff (in conjunction with the health and safety at work act 1974). This applies to the Ranger team and the Grounds Maintenance team. Training is always available throughout the year for anyone who feels it will benefit them. Risk assessments are carried out on all tools and tasks conducted by the services. Risk assessments are encouraged even if it is felt the risk is manageable.

Situated in the council depot there are three fire officers, two health and safety officers and there is a health and safety committee. The health and safety committee meets to discuss the Council health and safety policies to ensure they are up-to-date and relevant to the staff they are placed upon. The system that was used to report accidents in the workplace was updated in 2012. It was originally a paper based reporting system but it was felt the paper trail was too long, leading to a longer time frame from when the accident was reported to it being logged. A new database has been put in place to reduce the amount of time and the paper being used in reporting accidents. By computerising all reports on a spreadsheet, everyone has access to them at all times. This enables results to be analysed at ease. Analysis allows the council to identify patterns and accidents which aids the development of new policies and suitable training for specific areas where accidents occur.

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council have a playground safety check system in place called 'Playsafe'. These playground safety checks are carried out using a mobile phone application that links directly with an online 'Playsafe' database. All ranger staff members who carry out these checks are RoSPA (The Royal Society for the prevention of accidents) trained to level 1 – Routine Inspections. Visual checks are carried out by Ranger team members on a weekly basis, however other teams that are in there daily, carry out visual inspections and any problems are reported.

By logging any faults found on the 'Playsafe' handheld devices, it firstly eliminates the need for paper which can get lost or the information written down fails to get passed on to the relevant people, and secondly it provides the maintenance ranger with direct access to the findings and they can see photos, the risk and then prioritise repairs accordingly.

Quarterly checks are carried out by the maintenance ranger who is trained to RoSPA level 2 as an Operational Inspector. This is a thorough check of all fixtures, nuts, bolts etc and findings are also logged on to the 'Playsafe' computerised checklist. Annually an independent company who are recognised by RoSPA carry out an through inspection and report back to the council with their findings and with improvements that need to be made.

The football pitches get a lot of use and as a result weekly checks are made on the goalposts when the rangers check the other facilities in the park, therefore any problems can be rectified swiftly.

5.2.2 RANGER SERVICE

The Ranger service not only patrol the parks and open spaces, they also carry out minor maintenance work on amenity infrastructures such as the park signs, benches, bins and playground equipment. The park rangers and a dedicated street care team operate with a 'find a fault and fix it' approach and a separate graffiti team are also on constant call out to solve any issues immediately. Repairs are carried out as soon as possible, if the item in question is considered a risk to health it will be cordoned off with an appropriate sign put in place warning of its danger. If the fix is out of the capabilities of the ranger service it is passed on to the dedicated maintenance ranger who patrols in a vehicle already stocked with tools. By carrying tools in the vehicle it allows a number of repairs to be carried out immediately when the problem is identified.

The ranger service are a team of 8, working on a 7 day rota and the shifts are worked out so there are rangers on duty from 8am to 11pm. Once the rangers have finished their shift at 11pm their duty phone is diverted so any issues that arise in the night will be dealt with by the duty officer. So effectively if someone has a problem in a park they can reach someone 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Due to the Ranger services job profile it is important to provide a wide spectrum of training, this may include:

- Handling conflict
- Awareness and enforcement of bye-laws
- Dealing with anti-social behaviour
- Emergency first aid
- Playground inspections
- Carrying out patrolling and inspection duties
- Knowledge of green flag, what work is being carried out to achieve green flag status and the overall management plan

5.2.3 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

All facilities at Auriol Park comply with the statutory fire and safety regulations. In addition to this all staff are advised and trained on a regular basis. All Ranger vans carry a First Aid Kit and are First Aid at Work trained.

5.2.4 EMERGENCY CONTACT

When the Ranger service is on shift they respond to emergency calls placed to the council. Rangers carry at all times the duty phone so they can respond quickly to requests, thus eliminating the need to return to the office. When the Rangers are not on shift, the ranger duty phone is diverted to a duty officer who takes all out of office hours calls. When Rangers are called out to an emergency all correct paperwork procedures are completed in compliance with council policy. All parks and recreation grounds in the borough have signage with the relevant information for contacting the Ranger service or the out of office call out service.

If the emergency services are needed the Ranger service do not hesitate to get in contact and also encourage the public to contact the emergency services if the rangers are not on site. The rangers are familiar with working with the emergency services, assisting them on any incidents that occur on council land. There are times when the Ranger service will be contacted by the emergency services when they are not familiar with certain parts of council land.

5.2.5 SECURITY

The park itself is completely surrounded by fencing. The majority of the fencing is green palisade fencing made of hot and cold rolled steel sections and is 1.8m in height. Auriol Park is also one of eleven sites in the borough that get locked up overnight. All the gates are locked by the ranger service and this is done in such a way that avoids any members of the public getting locked in. Should a member of the public get locked in, they can call the number displayed in the park and will be let out. The park is locked as early as half an hour before sunset so the locking up times vary throughout the year and it is dependent on the sunset times. As part of the lock up procedure the pavilion is locked and alarmed. Should the alarm go off over night, the duty officer will be alerted and can take the necessary procedures to investigate.

5.2.6 CLOSED-CIRCUIT TELEVISION

There is CCTV that is active in Auriol Park with several cameras facing towards different parts of the park and car park. The main CCTV hub with monitor can be found inside the pavilion in the alarm room, therefore very few people have access to it. Auriol is no longer considered a crime hot spot so the CCTV is very rarely called upon by the Council or Police. The last time the Police requested to see it was in 2014 to see if the cameras had picked up a crime that had happened outside of the park.

CCTV is also restricted to where it is pointing to however in 2017 the rangers will be supplied with new vehicles which will come equipped with CCTV. Should rangers be on site and witness any criminal behaviour, it can be recorded and used as evidence if needed.

5.2.7 DOG ENFORCEMENT

All of the parks in the borough are extremely popular with dog walkers which in turn lead to the problem of dog fouling. It is an issue that is a high priority for the council. If a dog walker finds themselves in a need of a bag, Rangers carry bags on them at all times. There are notices up all over the park instructing people to pick up after their dog. These include stickers and bin posters, a type of which can be seen in figure 19, stencilling on the ground as can be seen in figure 20 and good dog ownership posters displayed in the bins. It is important to encourage the public to pick up after their dog as the health impacts of dog mess when making contact with eyes is well documented. Toxocariasis occurs when toxocara worm eggs in dog mess come into contact with the eyes. This can lead to partial and/or complete blindness.

Over the course of the last few years there has been an increase in the concern over multiple dog walkers. This ranges from members of the public who own more than two dogs to people who run dog walking businesses and have been seen to have in excess of ten dogs. The concern is that as commercial dog walking is a fairly new concept, the legislation on what is acceptable is not clear. The issues range from: should there be a limit to the amount of dogs per person? Should they be on a lead? Does the walker have the necessary insurances? etc.

The Council understand that this is an issue that needs to be addressed but are also aware that this this is a controversial topic that generates strong opinions from both sides. We recognise that measures put in place to control this activity will need to be fair and appropriate.



Figure 19 Poster Displayed in Litterbins on being a Responsible Dog Owner



Figure 20 Dog stencil sprayed on the pavement

5.2.8 BYELAWS

Byelaws apply to all pleasure grounds and open spaces in the Borough of Epsom and Ewell. The Byelaws For Auriol Park are made under Section 164 of the Public Health Act, 1875, and Section 15 of the Open Spaces Act, 1906.

Particular byelaws have been chosen from Section 15 of the Open Spaces Act 1906 These byelaws are consistent across all areas designated as pleasure grounds and open spaces except for byelaws pertaining to dog prohibition, canine faeces and dogs on leads, which are allocated to individual named areas. Auriol Park has several 'dog prohibited' areas including the Playground, Bowling Green and Tennis Courts (Schedule 1, Part 3, Under section 15 of the Open Spaces Act 1906). Part of Auriol Park excluding the dog ban areas are covered by the canine faeces removal byelaw (Schedule 2, Part 3, Under section 15 of the Open Spaces Act 1906). The byelaw requiring that dogs must be kept on a lead (Schedule 3, Part 1, Section 164 of the Public Health Act 1875) does not apply to Auriol Park.

5.2.9 POLICING IN AURIOL PARK

Auriol Park falls under the 'Epsom & Ewell North' section of the Surrey Police Safer Neighbourhood Team. Regular foot patrols of the park are carried out by the Police Community Support Officers, dealing with issues such as anti-social behaviour and other community concerns.

An arrangement existed with Rangers and PCSO's whereby joint patrols of Auriol and other borough Parks were carried out, however due to lack of resource and Auriol Park not being considered a crime hot spot these joint patrols are no longer carried out. However the Ranger service and all departments that may be in the parks, including the 'Friends Of' are encouraged to report any damage or crime to the police, as the distribution of police resources is dependent on the volume of calls/reports relating to a particular area or issue.

5.3 CLEAN AND WELL MAINTAINED

5.3.1 WORK SCHEDULING

Epsom and Ewell's work program is designed to ensure that each team is allocated a program of works that is defined prior to the start of each period by the management team.

To reach the required standard in our parks, the program of works is based on a schedule of need for example grass and hedge cutting, emptying of bins etc which is on a specific frequency or rotation but is responsive to seasonal changes and sporadic events which could have an impact like flooding or a large public celebration, as well as user feedback which could come in the form of a letter, telephone call or CRM case from a member of the public, Councillor or Council staff members.

5.3.2 MONITORING

Monitoring of the services is undertaken at a number of levels and on an ongoing basis. The Council monitors the performance of the staff out in the field but also through an appraisal system, so operational issues are identified and responded to in a sufficient timescale. Without monitoring, problems could be ongoing for long periods of time unbeknownst to managers which could contribute to long term issues.

5.3.3 LITTER

Auriol Park has 7 litter bins placed in a number of locations along the pathways and also in the children's playground. The litter bins were replaced in 2013 to a new style which also could be used to dispose of dog waste. This meant the red dog waste bins could be removed from the park.

The bins are checked on every day by the street cleansing team and emptied. The Ranger service also provides a litter picking service when they are on patrol. In the summer when there is more activity in the park additional patrols are made to combat the increased activity which leads to a sharp rise in litter.

5.3.4 CLINICAL WASTE

Any litter such as clinical waste, syringes etc are collected by the rangers who are 'sharps' trained. Using special tools the item is inserted into a lockable 'sharps' box. The location of the 'sharps' will be recorded and when full, the box will be transported to the designated clinical waste disposal point.

5.3.5 GRAFFITI

There is a graffiti team working all year round who respond to call outs from the public and from staff members who have found graffiti while on their day to day inspections. Timescale for removal is 4-6 weeks unless the graffiti is racist or offensive in which case it is removed within 1 working day and reported to the police.

5.3.6 PAVILION MAINTENANCE

The Ranger service is in charge of keeping the pavilions locked at the required times. A company called Kier (maintenance contractor) are in charge of all internal maintenance (cleaning, fire extinguishers and electrical equipment inspections). Kier carries out monthly planned preventative maintenance (PPM) where the water temperatures and emergency lights are checked. There are other PPM tasks that come up quarterly, half yearly and annually that also get attended to. In the pavilion there are changing rooms, toilets, shower facilities and a kitchen/meeting room with complete cooking facilities.

5.3.7 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

All grounds maintenance work is carried out (to correct horticultural practices) to a schedule to ensure particular sites do not get forgotten about or overlooked which can happen when working from memory. After each site is complete it is logged on the grounds maintenance database with the appropriate times, dates and names of the staff who were on site. The grounds maintenance team also respond to CRM (customer relationship management) notices. These may have been served via a call from a member of the public or from a staff member after visual inspections of the sites.

The work carried out is varied throughout the year. In the height of summer, the grass and shrub beds get far more attention than in the winter months as growth is at its fastest. During the autumn and winter months, leaf clearance is carried out regularly as well as preparing beds for selected bedding plans. All organic waste accumulated from grounds maintenance work is taken to a composting site until it is suitable for using on the shrub beds. All hard surface sports facilities (playgrounds, five-a-side pitches, tennis courts and basketball courts) are all spray cleaned when it is felt necessary. A build-up of dust and dirt on these hard services make them increasingly slippery underfoot. Spray cleaning using a jet power washer plate that glides along the surface removes all dust and dirt from in between the tiny crevices in the tarmac surface. All dust and dirt that has been excavated is then removed with either a hard brush or a backpack blower before it has the chance to work its way back into the tarmac.

1. **Weed control** - This is carried out in the parks by staff that are certified with PA1 and PA6 certificates. It is important that only trained staff use these chemicals, not only for their personal safety but when working in parks as there are animals and park users to consider. The certificate PA1 is the theory behind pesticide application. It covers legislation regarding environmental, public and personal safety and all procedures regarding health and safety. PA6 is the certificate for manual handling and application of pesticides. Epsom and Ewell Borough Council do not have a schedule for spraying in the parks. It is felt that scheduled spraying may lead to excessive spraying. When parks are inspected by the Ranger services and Grounds Maintenance, they will determine as and when spraying may need to be carried out.
2. **Litter** - Litter is collected as and when it is necessary. The Ranger service carries out litter picking when on patrol. The grounds maintenance teams also carry out litter picking as part of their duties when working in the park.
3. **Dog fouling** - When carrying out daily inspections, the Ranger service collect any dog mess found on public walkways in the parks.

Job	Carried Out By	Frequency	Additional Information
Grass	Grounds Maintenance	Summer –Weekly Winter – Dormant Spring – Monthly	Spring and Autumn are done when deemed necessary. No definitive rota
Shrubs (Mature)	Grounds Maintenance	Dependent on results of monthly inspections	Usually 1-2 cut backs during summer, one more in winter
Weeding (in beds)	Grounds Maintenance	Dependent on results of monthly inspections	Usually monthly, possible addition of pesticide application
Line Marking on Pitches	Grounds Maintenance	During football season it is done bi-weekly	During periods of rain, application will increase
Playground Inspections	Rangers	Weekly visual, Quarterly physical, plus an annual independent inspection	All results are logged on 'Playsafe' online database
Repairs (playground, benches, bins and sports equipment)	Ranger maintenance service	All faults are logged after inspection and will be repaired or removed immediately	Maintenance team also responds to complaints from the public
Arboriculture	Tree Team/Ranger Service	Annual Inspection	During adverse weather conditions, rangers inspect parks for tree damage and report to tree team

5.3.9 EQUIPMENT

All grounds maintenance equipment is purchased centrally with great consideration for staff safety in regards to emissions and vibration. All staff are inducted before using all machinery and equipment to ensure the equipment is used efficiently and effectively. Annual service programs are in place for all equipment and daily safety checks are carried out and recorded.

5.3.10 ARBORICULTURAL MANAGEMENT

Increasing public concerns about environmental and sustainability issues are focusing our attention on the importance of trees in our towns and countryside. The Borough Council manages and maintains thousands of publicly owned trees; these include 8000 street trees and over 50,000 trees distributed across our 2500 acres of public open space. Trees make a major contribution to the quality of the local environment but they also need careful management and we have a duty of care in respect of tree management to take reasonable steps to ensure that trees do not constitute a danger or a legal nuisance.

To comply with our duty of care and legal responsibility, the Council follow a tree risk management policy. It is important that the Council keep these programmes intact and adequately funded. This will help to ensure we comply with duties over public safety and nuisance as well as promoting environmental care.

As part of this policy the Council operate a comprehensive tree inspection programme every 3 years. Tree care is the responsibility of the council tree officer Jeremy Young. Jeremy oversees all inspections and work carried out and when he is not in the office the deputy tree officer takes over. The professional tree inspections are undertaken by Council officers and qualified tree inspectors. Sites are zoned in accordance with risk. The inspections involve visual tree assessments to evaluate whether there are any observable defects that constitute a danger or actionable nuisance. When defects are identified they are scheduled for work under the defect management programme. The time scales for these works are undertaken in accordance with the assessed priorities as agreed in table 2.

Priority	Target Response
Emergency	Within 24 hours
High	Within 12 weeks
Medium	Within 1 year
Low	Within 3 years or reassessed within this time frame.

Table 2 Agreed timescales for defect tree work

In addition to defect management, the Council operate programmes of routine tree pruning to help control tree growth. Routine tree pruning involves pruning to raise the canopy above the road, clearing phone wires and lamps etc. Access work is the removal of suckers and low branches for pedestrian footway clearance. The work is done as appropriate for subsidence management. One of our main Council priorities is to protect and enhance the environment. Therefore we will not undertake tree works which could be detrimental to natural biodiversity or the aesthetic quality of the landscape, unless absolutely necessary. Where possible trees will be allowed to grow naturally and maintenance tends to focus on higher priority public safety and nuisance factors, such as storm damage, dealing with decayed or dead trees, removing branch obstruction to the highway or pruning branches encroaching onto buildings.

The Council has awarded the tree maintenance contract to a locally based and well equipped arboricultural company called Advanced Tree Services LTD (ATS). ATS undertake the vast majority of Council tree maintenance, including emergency call out, routine pruning, tree felling, stump grinding and planting. They also assist the Council tree officers with tree inspections. There is at least one team of tree surgeons from ATS that work in the Borough full time.

During spells of adverse weather, the Ranger service will inspect the park to check for falling trees or limbs that may be a hazard to park users. This is not as big a problem on some sites like Epsom Common where many of the trees can be left where they fell, but in Auriol Park it is vital to keep the green space clear from tree debris.

5.4 SUSTAINABILITY

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council strives to maintain and improve its green spaces using sustainable methods. All service departments involved in the maintenance of Auriol Park are encouraged to carry out their duties using methods that are environmentally friendly. As Sustainability in definition, is the quality of not being harmful to the environment or depleting natural resources, and thereby supporting long-term ecological balance (Dictionary.com), the Council understand the importance of maintaining these standards wherever possible for the long term ecological benefits to its parks and open spaces

5.4.1 ORGANIC MATERIAL/RECYCLING

Throughout the year, the grounds maintenance teams remove all organic waste produced from pruning and grass cutting. This green waste is taken off site to a large composting facility in the nearby Horton Country Park. When enough green waste has been collected, trained staff members use mulching equipment to compost all the green waste. The process involves shredding the waste but burning it sufficiently to kill the weed seeds. This compost is piled and left to continue decomposing. When it is sufficiently composted it can be returned to the beds in the form of mulch. This mulch provides nutrients to the beds but it can also serve another purpose. The Christmases' of 2009 and 2010 left all of Epsom and Ewell covered in snow, dealing with sub-zero temperatures. Mulch can be used to insulate the beds. Newly planted shrubs will struggle to cope with such low temperatures in comparison to established shrubs. By insulating the beds it gives the root systems a little extra help in resisting frost damage. Mulching also helps keep weed growth under control. Epsom and Ewell Borough Council work hard to ensure they do not use peat. They also try to buy their plant stock from responsible nurseries that do not use peat.

5.4.2 PESTICIDES

The use of pesticides is kept to a minimum, and where they are used, the most eco-friendly products are selected. All staff must be trained to PA1 or PA6 standard. The purchase, storage, usage and disposal of chemicals is carefully controlled under COSHH. A basic glyphosate is the chemical utilised within the park.

5.4.3 PEAT

Peat is **not** used in Auriol Park and the council uses its own recycled waste as mulch for the shrub beds.

5.4.4 POLLUTION REDUCTION

All chemicals are stored in secure containers that meet Health and Safety regulations. The distribution of keys is regulated to ensure chemicals are not stolen or mislaid through negligence. Pesticide spraying in the parks is only carried out when absolutely necessary. It is felt that a schedule of regular spraying may lead to excessive

spraying. It is always the prerogative to weed the beds manually, in summer months when weed growth is at its fastest, spraying is carried out more regularly. When any of the teams are working in the parks they are encouraged to park the vehicle and walk to the specific site reducing engine emissions from the vehicles.

5.4.5 WASTE MINIMISATION

Waste is not only expensive to get rid of it also has an environmental cost due to the pollution caused by the disposal of such waste. Epsom & Ewell Borough Council identifies two ways of tackling this problem 1) reducing actual production of green waste and 2) re-using green waste after composting, with the emphasis being on the former of these. Green Waste can be reduced by avoiding unnecessary pruning, using herbicides correctly and allowing leaves to decompose naturally amongst shrubs and hedge bottoms. As much green waste as possible is recycled, however loads with a high percentage of weed content are not recycled minimising the risk of seeds spreading. Any materials that cannot be recycled are disposed of by the Council street care team.

5.4.6 POLLUTION REDUCTION, WATER EFFICIENCY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The Epsom & Ewell Environmental Policy aims to reduce the amount of energy used through good management, training, and informed purchasing practices and decisions. Vehicles and machinery are maintained regularly. Vehicles are not encouraged into the park and staff empty bins by hand, taking the rubbish out to the bins where possible. The operational services team also tries to reduce dependence on mains water supplies for irrigation. Watering of plants is kept to a minimum and watering points are located away from public access. Effective training of staff, including health and safety, and following all environmental legislation relevant to the council, prevents incidents of pollution.

5.4.7 ARBORICULTURE AND WOODLAND

Newly planted trees are staked, watered well and checked on a regular basis. Dead wood should be left standing if possible, to provide an important habitat for invertebrates and other habitats. Clippings and cuttings should be composted where possible and re-used within the park environment.

The Friends Of have been given access to the water points in the park so they can actively water any newly planted shrubs and trees, especially in periods of hot weather. Stock should be bought from approved suppliers, locally if possible. Mature trees should be inspected on a cyclical basis and information stored preferably on an ICT package for future use. Dead wood should be left standing if possible, to provide an important habitat for invertebrates and other habitats. Clippings and cuttings should be composted where possible and re-used within the park environment.

5.4.8 ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Many of the pavilions and changing rooms in the borough have lighting that only comes on when a sensor is activated meaning that when there is no one in the rooms the lights go off, avoiding wasted energy. For the facilities that do not have light sensors the rangers check that all the lights are turned off when they lock them up.

5.4.9 WATER EFFICIENCY

The pavilions where possible are fitted with self-closing taps for all showers and taps. Changing facilities are notorious for wasting water, the biggest culprits being showers left on after use. Self-closing taps are the most efficient method of saving water.

5.4.10 ASSET MANAGEMENT

A centralised asset management plan exists to account for and manage all Council assets. This plan includes all assets in the Borough's parks and open spaces.

5.5 CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

Biodiversity, a contraction of "biological diversity," generally refers to the variety and variability of life on Earth. One of the most widely used definitions defines it in terms of the variability within species, between species and between ecosystems. It is a measure of the variety of organisms present in different ecosystems (United Nations Environment Programme, World Conservation Monitoring Centre). However during the last century, decreases in biodiversity have been increasingly observed. In 2007, German Federal Environment Minister Sigmar Gabriel cited estimates that up to 30% of all species will be extinct by 2050 (*BBC News*). As biodiversity contributes to our very existence on this planet, we must adopt the "Think Globally, Act Locally" concept which originally began at the grassroots level, however, it is now a global concept with high importance (*Warren Heaps, International Forum*), and adopting sustainable ways of living will ensure the protection of biodiversity and our future.

5.5.1 AGENDA 21- LOCAL BIODIVERSITY

The need for biodiversity was recognised at the United Nation's 1992 Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit. Leaders recognised that a diverse environment is essential to maintain air quality, to provide valuable species for food and medicine, and to provide a varied and interesting environment for future generations. As a result the Government were asked to produce national and regional biodiversity Action Plans, which filtered down at Local Authority level through the Local Agenda 21 initiative.

5.5.2 EPSOM AND EWELL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN 2010

A 'Local Biodiversity Action Plan' has been produced for Epsom & Ewell to help ensure both the long term protection and enhancement of biodiversity within the Borough. The complete Epsom & Ewell Local Biodiversity Action Plan can be found at:

<http://www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/EEBC/Environment/Biodiversity.htm>

This strategy provides an over-arching review of open space in the borough and has been developed in line with current national, regional and local policy context and initiatives. The following objectives from the biodiversity action plan for Epsom & Ewell 2010 are of particular relevance in informing the Management Plan.

Objective 1: Develop partnerships to ensure that the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in Epsom and Ewell is maintained in the long term.

Objective 2: Ensure the conservation and enhancement of habitats and species, as specified nationally and in the Surrey Habitat Action Plans.

Objective 3: Ensure opportunities for the conservation and enhancement of the whole biodiversity resource in Epsom and Ewell are identified considered and acted upon.

Objective 4: Raise awareness, appreciation and involvement in the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in Epsom and Ewell

Objective 5: Provide on-going monitoring of biodiversity in Epsom and Ewell.

Objective 6: Seek to increase the funding available for the long-term conservation, enhancement and monitoring of biodiversity in Epsom and Ewell.

Objective 7: Seek to identify the wider benefits to the community of improving biodiversity

5.5.3 EPSOM AND EWELL'S SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY 2011 – 2022

'A Brighter Future'

A Brighter future is Epsom and Ewell's Sustainable Community Strategy. The Strategy looks at the future for Epsom and Ewell, It sets out how the Borough's many positive aspects will be developed and how the issues and challenges faced by the Borough will be met through partnership working.

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council's ambition is:

"To maintain and develop those distinctive characteristics that make living and working in Epsom and Ewell a matter of conscious choice and, in conjunction with others, provide quality and innovative services that are based on the identified priorities of our residents"

The Local Strategic Partnership has identified the following topics as areas for future focus and partnership working:

- The visual appearance of the surroundings, both in terms of the natural and the built environment
- The impact of organisations and individuals in securing a sustainable future (recognising the need for economic health and more housing)
- The ability to get around (including the use of the existing transport and traffic infrastructure, car movements and alternative means of travel)
- The promotion of community safety and the enhancing of public confidence, recognising the formal position and responsibilities of the Borough's Community Safety Partnership
- The support for particular communities (children & young people, older people and the disabled, the disadvantaged and pockets of relative deprivation)
- Social change and the achievement of a balanced demography
- Economic prosperity
- Improving Epsom Town Centre and maintaining other local centres

5.5.4 GREEN SPACES STRATEGY

Epsom and Ewell Borough council also have a Green Spaces Strategy. The development of a green spaces strategy for the whole of the borough provides the context in which land managers, planners and recreation providers can work to provide this borough with open spaces for the use of the residents and visitors alike. The Green Spaces Strategy can be found in the appendix. With a simple strategy in place, achievable strides can be made towards improving all Green Space in the borough. With the Green Spaces Strategy in mind, the Action Plan will identify what improvements will be implemented at Auriol Park.

5.5.5 EPSOM & EWELL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY

A Green Infrastructure Policy for the Borough was written in 2013 by the Countryside team and Head of Planning Policy. Green infrastructure (GI) is a term used to refer to the living network of green spaces, water and other environmental features in both urban and rural areas. It is often used in an urban context to cover benefits provided by wildlife, trees, parks, gardens, road verges, allotments, cemeteries, woodlands, rivers and wetlands. The report highlights the important role parks can play in conserving and enhancing biodiversity across the Borough. It was noted that parks and formal gardens provide a valuable community resource and are important

open spaces in urban areas. For example, Rosebery Park and Mounthill Gardens provide essential green spaces within Epsom Town Centre which are heavily frequented by residents and those employed there, as well as students from the UCA.

The main objectives of the study are to:

- Bring together existing green infrastructure evidence in Epsom & Ewell
- Identify gaps in the local plan evidence base
- Map the Borough's existing GI assets.

The study's main recommendation is to create a landscape scale Green Infrastructure Strategy that seeks to protect and enhance a Borough-wide network of green infrastructure that delivers a wide range of benefits including improvements to biodiversity, public access, health and well-being, sports provision, allotments, flood protection and air quality.

The full document can be found at:

<http://dev-epsom-ewell.pantheonsite.io/sites/default/files/documents/residents/planning/planning-policy/Green%20Infrastructure%20Study.pdf>

5.5.6 ECOLOGY/WILDLIFE AND HABITATS

Within Epsom and Ewell there are sites designated for their biodiversity value. There are four Local Nature Reserves (LNR) in the Borough including Epsom Common which is Surrey's largest LNR. The other LNR's are Horton Country Park LNR, Howell Hill LNR, and running parallel with Ewell Court Park, the Hogsmill LNR.

Along with national legislation protecting wildlife, for example the 'Wildlife and Countryside Act, the 'Greenbelt', 'Ancient Woodland', 'Protected Hedgerows, 'Tree Preservation Orders' and areas identified as 'Strategic Open Space' in Epsom and Ewell also afford biodiversity some protection by limiting and controlling development. In addition some land in the borough is owned by trusts which aim to protect and enhance biodiversity.

5.5.7 FLORA AND FAUNA

The area that is used most by sporting groups is the lower part of the park and is mainly grass. There are no shrub beds or flower beds in this part of the park except for the edges which are lined with large mature trees.

The 'Friends Of' carried out some work to the tree beds near to the Thorndon Garden entrance. Here they used large wooden sleepers to edge the tree beds in order to stop the soil encroaching on to the pathway and to control leaf drop.



The top section of the park, predominantly behind the pavilion is where the shrub beds of the park can be found and this area of the park is lined with a hedge border which is maintained only outside of bird nesting season (March – August). Any plants used are chosen by the Council or come from the Herald of Spring event that is held at Bourne Hall. A particular plant that was chosen is a shade loving ground cover plant that produces small lilac and purple flowers and helps to suppress weed growth. A mimosa tree (see figure 21) was planted a few years ago as well as cherry trees that

can be found by the allotments at the top of the park. By the single pedestrian gate on Salisbury Road it was decided that low growing shrubs should be planted so as not to impede on the houses that back on to the park. The shrub bed that is behind the children’s playground was planted with hardy growing herb plants, as well as not requiring too much cultivation and maintenance it was also intended as a communal herb garden that the allotment users could have access to.

Figure 21 Mimosa Tree

As the Friends Of group play a large part in the planting and upkeep of the vegetation in the park, it was decided that they should have access to the watering points in the park.

This allows the ‘Friends Of’ to easily maintain the areas they have planted, another added benefit of this is that new specimens planted by the Council can be looked after by the ‘Friends Of’, especially in periods of very warm weather.

Auriol Park is home to many varieties of tree, giving an interesting vista when looking cross the park. Their layout is mainly concentrated around the edge of the park leaving the grass areas open. The layout of the trees can be seen on the map in figure 25. There are two veteran trees in the park, both are English Oak trees and can be found near to the pavilion and are circled in figure 23 and pictured during winter in figure 24. As well as these there are many well established mature trees. Some distinctive types that stand out in the park are the large Indian Bean Tree (*Catalpa bignonioides*) that grows on the lawn to the left of the pavilion.



Figure 22 Trees and shrubs lining back of the playground

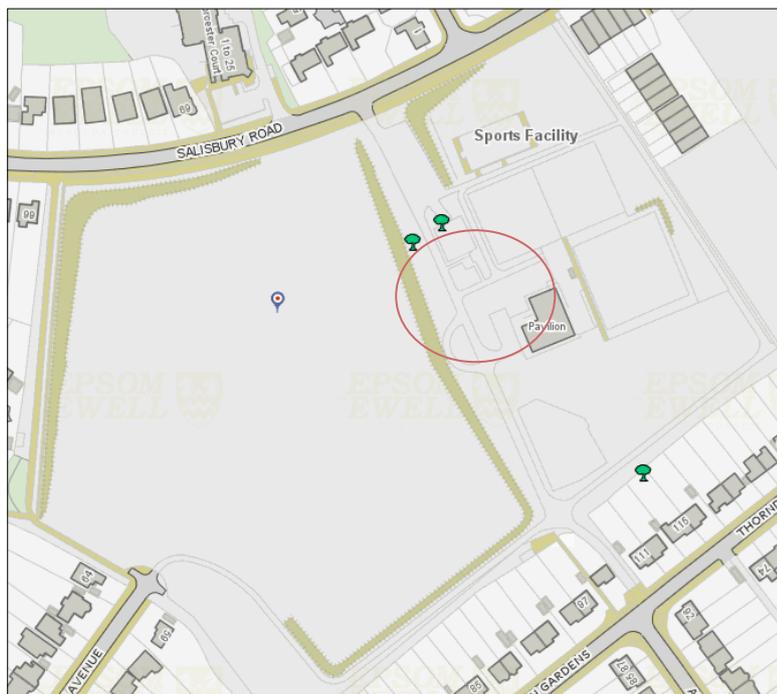


Figure 23 Location of two veteran English Oak trees in Auriol Park



Figure 24 Veteran Oak trees in winter

Other trees that can be found in Auriol Park include but are not limited to

Common Name	Genus	Species
Balsam Poplar	<i>Populus balsamifera</i>	
Common Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	
Common Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>	
Crack Willow	<i>Salix fragilis</i>	
Field Maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>	
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	
Hornbeam	<i>Carpinus betulus</i>	
Lawson Cypress	<i>Chamaecyparis lawsoniana</i>	
Norway Maple	<i>Acer platanoides</i>	
Pissard's Plum	<i>Prunus cerasifera</i>	'Nigra'
River Birch	<i>Betula nigra</i>	
Wild Cherry	<i>Prunus avium</i>	

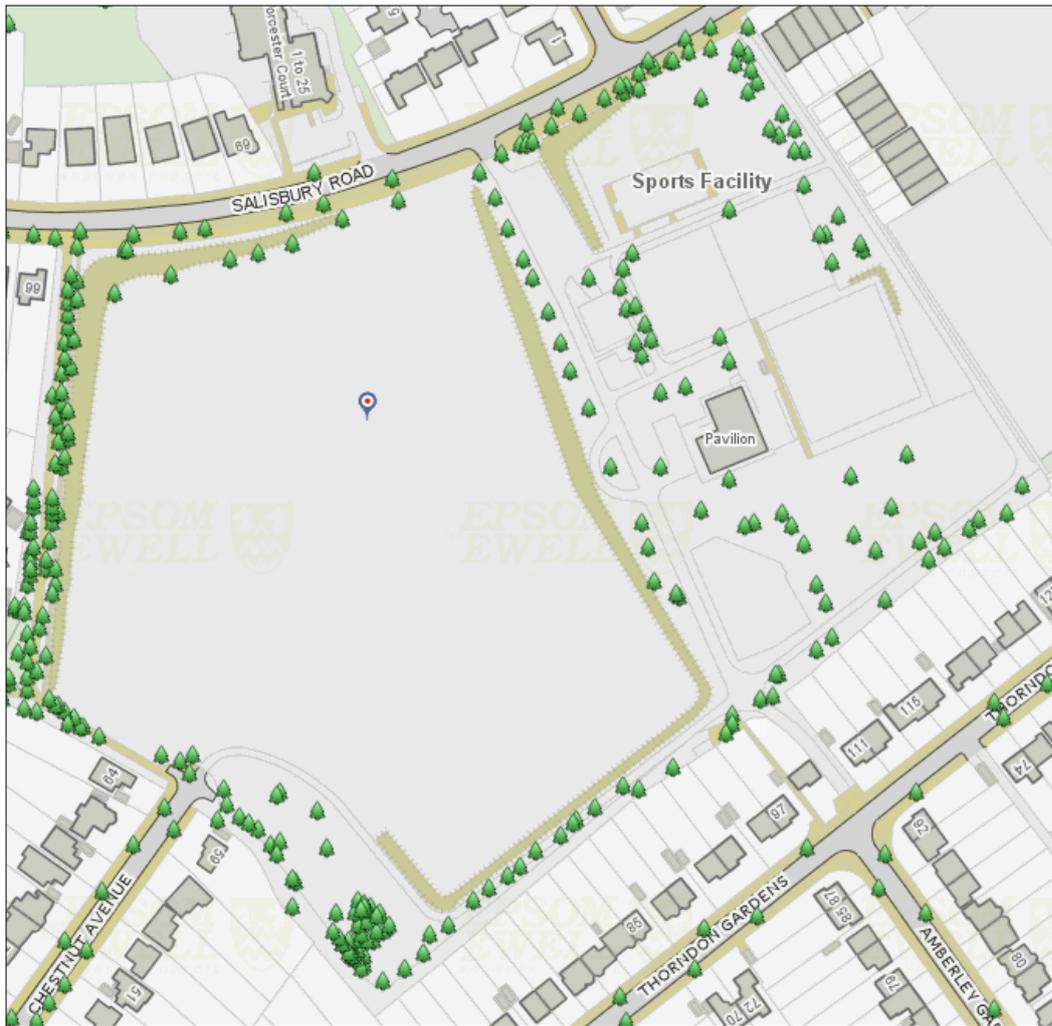


Figure 25 Tree map of Auriol Park

5.6 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

5.6.1 FRIENDS OF EPSOM & EWELL PARKS (FEEP)

Many of the Boroughs larger well used parks have a 'Friends of' user group. These 'Friends Of' groups are also part of the larger group 'Friends of Epsom and Ewell Parks' (FEEP). The 'FEEP' group are in place to ensure all parks are looked after as some are so small that they do not attract enough people to form their own individual 'Friends Group'. The 'Friends of Epsom and Ewell Parks' meet every three months along with members of the Council to discuss current issues, projects and progress.

5.6.2 FRIENDS OF AURIOL PARK

Auriol Park is one of the parks in Epsom & Ewell that benefit from having its own 'Friends of Auriol Park' group. The Friends Of are very active and meet every first Wednesday of the month to carry out tasks in the park which could be from litter picking, to planting, to building a raised bed out of old sleepers.

In March the Herald of Spring floral display takes place at the local Bourne Hall Park. Once the display has finished, all of the local 'friends of' groups are invited to come and take some of the left over plants and bulbs to plant in their parks which the Friends Of Auriol utilise.

5.6.3 PARTNERSHIPS

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council have an obligation to support the holder of the current Home Ground Agreement which is Stoneleigh Athletic Football Club (SAFC), to deliver their Football Development Plan (FDP) as agreed with the Football Foundation as part of the terms of funding.

The ways in which Epsom & Ewell Borough Council links with the football clubs development plan are summarised below:

- SAFC will review its FDP in conjunction with Surrey FA (SFA) and EEBC annually
- SAFC will work with EEBC and their ground staff to improve playing surface and maintenance (FA Pitch Improvement team to help with advice to improve and develop the pitches)
- SAFC will aim to use the facilities at Auriol Park to promote social and sporting activities for club members and visitors
- SAFC worked with EEBC in the Surrey Youth Games (SYG) 2016, leading the girls senior football team (9-11 year olds). Training sessions took place at Auriol Park in 2016 between the months of April and June
- SAFC are committed to working with EEBC as part of SYG once again in 2017. Training sessions will take place at Auriol.

5.6.4 AURIOL PARK EVENTS

Tri-Fest

In September 2015 and September 2016 the event known as Trifest was held in Auriol Park. Organised by the Residents associations of 3 wards, it was an event for the residents of Ewell Court, Stoneleigh & Auriol and Cuddington to come together for a great day of fun and live music. In 2015 they had an ABBA tribute act and then in 2016 to celebrate HM The Queen's 90th birthday a Freddie Mercury & Queen live tribute band played to the crowd. At the events they've had stalls hosted by 1st Ewell Court Scouts, Cuddington Residents Association, local WI ladies and Epsom Girl guiding. The event had free entry to the public with the option to give a donation. Due to its success it is scheduled to be held again in Auriol in September 2017.

5.7 MARKETING

All parks are advertised on Epsom and Ewell Borough Council website. All of the parks facilities are advertised as well as the 'Friends of' groups. This website is a great form of advertisement as all the information can be found in one accessible place.

What we have to remember is that it is only accessible to those who have internet access. In the Action Plan we aim to maximise the usage of the two new notice boards in Auriol Park that are going in early 2017 to promote all events and facilities to those who may be new to the park or who cannot view the information online. Notice boards also provide a fantastic platform for 'Friends of' groups to advertise themselves and their activities to attract new members.

1.1.1. IN HOUSE USER SURVEY

The Council used to use an external program called GreenSTAT to conduct surveys of their parks but this is no longer running. However the council wanted to find a way to keep the public involved in the future of our parks and open spaces so trialed their own in-house survey for Nonsuch Park, a well-used and loved park that is shared with the London Borough of Sutton. 1200 postal votes were sent out and 635 returned and was deemed a success. Due to this success the ranger service carried out surveys for Alexandra Recreation Ground in 2015 and Auriol Park in 2016 and both although on a smaller scale have proved very successful.

1.1.2. IN HOUSE SURVEY RESULTS

The survey ran from 07 November to 02 December 2016 - a period of four weeks. The survey was available in paper and electronic formats. The electronic version was featured on the Council's main webpage and via our social media platforms Twitter and Facebook - all containing links to the online survey. Postcard-size fliers were also distributed to:

- Mead Infant School
- Auriol Junior School
- Cuddington Primary School.

In total, 372 survey responses were received; of which 316 were paper-based (85%, n=316/372) and 56 were online submissions (15%, n=56/372).

Respondent profile:

The majority of respondents were female (66%, n=206/312) and 34% (n=105/312) were male.

Based on age groupings: 52% (n=178/340) were over 55 years old and 48% (n=162/340) were under 55 years old.

When asked about ethnicity, the majority of respondents (83%, n=274/330) described themselves as British white or English white.

The majority of respondents (64%, n=209/329) said they were Christian.

Four per cent (n=14/315) of respondents indicated they had a disability according to the Equalities Act of 2010.

Nearly six in ten respondents (58%, n=210/364) visit the park multiple times weekly; this comprises 19% (n=69/364) visiting daily and 39% (n=141/364) visiting two or three times weekly. A further 27% (n=98/364) visit the park two or three times monthly and 12% (n=45/364) visit the park two or three times a year. Only 1.4% (n=5/364) visit less than once a year.

Over eight in ten respondents travel to the park on foot (82%, n=341/414), whilst 13% (n=52/414) travel by car and 5% (n=20/414) by bicycle.

Overall, the most popular reason for visiting the park was to 'go for a walk' (14%, n=90/657). This was followed by 'use the playground' (13%, n=87/657) and 'children/family outing' (12%, n=82/657).

Looking at the age profile, most respondents between:

35-44yrs 'use the playground' (49%, n=41/84) and use the park for a 'children/family outing' (42%, n=32/77)

45-54yrs use the park to 'walk the dog' (28%, n=15/53)

55-64yrs use the park to 'walk the dog' (30%, n=16/53)

65-74yrs use the park to 'go for a walk' (37%, n=30/81) or use it 'as a short cut' (47%, n=18/38).

The top three positively rated aspects of the park were:

1. 'Accessibility' (88%, n=300/340)
2. 'Grass areas' (84%, n=295/350)
3. 'Facilities for 12's and under' (72%, n=204/283).

The top three negatively rated aspects of the park were:

1. 'Toilets' [lack of] (83%, n=186/225)
2. 'Range of visitor facilities' (29%, n=86/298)
3. 'Flower/shrub displays' and 'Facilities for over 12's' (tie: 23%; n=76/335, n=57/252; respectively).

Overall, 74% (n=275/352) of respondents rated 'the park in general' positively, 20% (n=70/352) rated the grounds fair and 2% (n=7/352) rated the grounds negatively.

Respondents who gave a negative response to an opinion relating to the park were also asked to provide reasons for their answer. The three most prevalent reasons were:

1. 'Toilets needed' (40%, n=152/379)
2. 'Benches/ seating' (10%, n=39/379)
3. 'Café needed' and 'Flowerbed/ shrubbery improvements' (tie: 8%, n=32/379).

When considering improving the visitor experience, the three most prevalent suggestions for using the park more often or staying for longer include:

1. Café needed (31%, n=107/342)
2. Toilets needed (25%, n=87/342)
3. Better range of facilities (12%, n=42/342).

Of the respondents that took part in this survey, 40 people kindly provided their names and contact information for volunteering activities. This information will be passed onto the management team for future volunteering opportunities.

5.8 MANAGEMENT PLAN

In completing this management plan using the criteria for Green Flag and having put other parks in the borough successfully through the Green Flag process we now understand the importance of a structured management plan. An improved management plan is not just for the day-to-day running of the facility but also for its long-term future. Our management plan will be a work in progress with the help of the parks user groups.

APPENDIX A

AURIOL ACTION PLAN

GREEN	Projects are on track and in control
YELLOW	The project has been postponed to explore alternatives or is not required to be active at this time
RED	The project has been stopped and will not meet its commitments for cost, schedule or scope. Projects in the red will need their budget and schedule increased, or their scope of work increased, to get back on track

Green Flag Criteria	Objective	Implementation/Task	Target Date	Achieved	Progress					Project Managed By
					2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
A Welcoming Place	New Notice Boards	Remove dated and uninformative signs	Spring 2017		During late 2016 the process was started with the design of the board and communication with Friends Of and Councillors. Boards went to final design at the beginning of February and will be due to install early spring					Ranger Service & Operational Services Management

	Pathways	Friends Of have identified the want for a pathway to run the entire loop of the park	Dependent on funding		Pathway currently ends at the gate that leads out into Chestnut Avenue. There is currently no pathway to the main gate so have to walk back the same way. Pathway would lead from this gate to the main gateway. Currently there is no funding for this project.					Managers / Outside Contractor
	Benches	It was requested in the 2016 public survey and also by the Friends Of that they would like more benches	2017		Area identified along the front edge with the pavilion behind. In particular for people who want to watch the football at the weekends. This will be actioned as part of the bench replacement programme.					Maintenance Ranger

	Name Plaques	To install name plaques on the main entrances and smaller entrances of the park	Summer 2017		The leftover budget has been allocated to getting name plaques on most of the main entrances of the park so the public know which park they are entering even from the smaller less obvious entrances. They will match the header board of the new noticeboards and will create a uniform look across all the parks in the borough. Quotes are being obtained.					Ranger Service
	Facilities	It was highlighted in the 2016 survey that the park lacked equipment for over 12's and more sporting equipment would make people stay/use the park	Dependent on funding		The MUGA is designed to be used for over 12's with basketball courts and football pitches. Any future funding can be					Procurement

					directed to facilities for the Over 12's – outdoor gyms have been installed in other parks, could be a possibility for Auriol, dependent on funding				
	It was highlighted in the 2015 survey that the park could do with a café as no food or drink facilities near by	2017		The café in part of the pavilion is due to open in 2017.					Procurement
	It was highlighted in the 2015 survey that the park required toilets	2017		Due to the cost associated with public toilets the majority of them were closed across the whole borough and this included the ones at Auriol. When the Café goes in to the pavilion later this year there will be a disabled toilet available whilst					Procurement

					the café is open and there are talks that as part of their agreement they will open the outdoor toilets to the public.				
Healthy, Safe & Secure	Securing the Park at night	The park and pavilion are to be locked up every day	Daily		Both the park and pavilion are locked on a daily basis, half an hour before sunset. Any break in attempt on the pavilion out of hours will set off an alarm and alert the duty officer				Ranger Service
	Field Drainage	Look at getting the football pitch drainage sorted out. Water collects at the base of the hill at does not drain away	2017		This has been an on-going problem with these pitches and remedial works have been conducted in the past. Further investigation will need to take place to access what further can be done.				GM / Managers

	Ruts	Issue with vehicles cutting corners in the winter.	Monitor		Looked into getting pavements widened at the corners but this is expensive so knee rail was installed to keep vehicles on the path. Will monitor any future damage caused by vehicles					Maintenance / Ranger Service
	Police Patrol	Liaise with local police and PCSO's to include Auriol Rec in their patrols	Monthly		Auriol Park is not considered a crime hot spot, and due to police resources, monthly police patrols are no longer carried out. Rangers continue to maintain close contact with PCSO's should the need of their assistance arises.					Ranger Service
	Anti-Social Behaviour	Auriol Park is locked at night, and the 2016 survey highlighted that they would like to see	On-Going		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The rangers log any incidents they encounter on their own 					Ranger Service

		some security during the day.			internal spreadsheet and to the police. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If rangers receive intel from the public they encourage them to report to the police.• There is CCTV in the park so any incidents would e recorded and can be accessed by the police.• There is no funding or resource for security personnel however the rangers tackle antisocial behaviour should they witness it• The café will provide a permanent presence so					
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					may deter antisocial behaviour					
	Encourage Responsible dog ownership and good practice in the park	Educational tools. Posters and stencilling.	2 – 3 Months		Posters & Stencilling on the pavement is listed as a priority park for Auriol Park. Stencilling is done as and when needed (weather permitting) and recorded on a database. The decision has been made after that there will be a space allocated on the new information boards highlighting good dog ownership.					Ranger Service
		Use the new noticeboards to highlight the dangers of not clearing up after your dog	Spring 2017		There will be a space allocated on the new information boards highlighting good dog ownership.					Ranger Service

		Deliver educational information at the Auriol Friends Of Tri-Fest	September 2017		Rangers to take the comms unit to the event and hand out information regarding the bye laws and good dog ownership.				Ranger Service
Clean & Well Maintained	Bins	Emptying & Maintenance	Weekly		All bins checked on and emptied daily. Inspected during weekly checks for damage and are replaced/repared as and when required				Operational Services / Ranger Service
	Litter	Removal of rubbish in the park	Daily		Any litter found is removed by the team that empties the bins on a daily basis. When the ranger team inspect the park on a weekly basis any litter found is removed. When the Friends OF have their task days, rubbish is left bagged by the bins and removed				Ranger Service

					by Street Cleansing or Ranger Service.					
	Dog Mess	Removal	Weekly		Rangers patrol park to check for dog mess. If found it is collected and recorded on a database					Ranger Service
	Locks	Maintained	Every 3 months		All locks on the gates should be removed, cleaned and oiled					Ranger Service
	Tennis Court Cleaning	Repair damaged tennis court surface	Weekly /Yearly		Weekly inspections to be carried out to monitor for damage. Annual cleaning is carried out by a contractor when debris builds up					Ranger Service & Specialist Contractor
	Repairs to playground/Muga/Tennis Courts/Park Furniture	Inspections	Weekly		All are inspected on a weekly basis and any damage found reported to the maintenance ranger.					Ranger Service / Maintenance Ranger

					Timescales for repairs depends on severity of damage				
	Flower Beds	It was highlighted in the 2016 that people would like to see more flowers in the park			Due to resource, maintenance and cost it is not viable to have high maintenance flower beds. There are some spring/summer flowering wildflower beds in the park and displays of spring bulbs which add seasonal colour.				
Sustainability	Electricity and Water Efficiency	Ensure all taps and showers in pavilion are functioning properly. Check all light bulbs in pavilion and lamp posts are energy efficient and are timed to come on at the correct times.	Weekly		Lamp posts are owned by Surrey County Council, any faults are reported directly to them. Kier (maintenance contractor) carries out monthly planned preventative maintenance (PPM) where the water				Ranger Service & Kier

					temperatures and emergency lights are checked. There are other PPM tasks that come up quarterly, half yearly and annually that also get attended to.					
Conservation & HEritage	Re-Introduction of wildlife area	Establish wildlife area in particular beetle loggery	Annually		Friends of collect dead wood and pile up at bottom of Auriol in a secluded area. This is left in situ to promote habitats for insects					Ranger Service / Friends of Auriol
	Maximise opportunities for ecological enhancement	Identify areas where mowing regimes can be relaxed and bulbs introduced	Annually		There are several areas in Auriol that have had bulbs planted by the friends of. These bulbs are in low use areas of the park – under signs, in edging of park and at bottom. These areas are left					Grounds Maintenance

					untouched by GM.					
Community Involvement	Promote the role that Auriol Park plays in improving the quality of life of local residents (e.g. health/contact with nature)	Promote an in house survey to give out to local residents and park users to shape the future of the park.	Winter 2016		The survey was carried out in 2016 and the results have fed in to the action plan					Ranger Service and Leisure Team
	Assess the number and profile of users, the pattern of use and users perception of safety and enjoyment	An in house survey will allow the local community to voice their opinion on how they feel the park can be improved	2021		The next in house survey will be carried out in 2021 in line with the next re-write of the management plan					Ranger Service and Leisure Team
	Encourage more visitors to the park	Friends Of group would like to see the area behind the muga utilised.	Budget dependent		Identified they would like an 'all weather' table tennis table to be installed in this area					Ranger Service

	Grow the Friend Of group	Identify more volunteers	2017		40 people who filled in the survey provided their details for future volunteering in the park. These will be passed on to the Friend liason officer					Ranger Service / Friend Of
Marketing	Make information and interperative material available about the history, landscape and ecological value of the park – and also environmental management in the park	Internet (the Council website) and leaflets.	Spring 2017		The Council launched a new external site to the public in late 2016. The parks pages will be updated with useful and up to date information					Ranger Service, Friends of Alex and Leisure Team
	Ensure information and interpretation is available and kept up to date	Use the new noticeboard to advertise future events and up to date information about the park	On Going		Checked during weekly inspections and updated as and when required					Samantha Whitehead/ Emma Brown/ Sandra Laxton

		Bins	Monthly		Advertisement of events in litter bins as and when needed updates. The bins will also become available in 2017 to hire to advertise external companies					Street Cleansing
	Promote the Green Flag award scheme across the Borough	Green Flag posters and flag poles to be renewed each year on receiving the award	Annually		Flag replaced and certificates replaced as and when successful in our application Green Flag					Ranger Service, Friends of Alex
Management	Write an up to date management plan available to staff at all levels and by different park user groups	Copy to be made available to all concerned members	Winter 2016		Completed in January 2017					Ranger Service

	Ensure effective monitoring of the management plan	Implement monitoring process by meetings between the Council and user groups thereby continually reviewing and updating the management plan	Weekly & Quarterly		Weekly checks of the park carried out by the Ranger service and bi-annual walkabouts arranged with the 'Friends Of' group					Ranger Service & Relevant Parties
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APPENDIX B

A GREEN SPACES STRATEGY

Borough of Epsom and Ewell

A Green Spaces Strategy



Skylark



Juniper



Orchid



Great Crested Newt

Green Spaces Strategy

Policy Statement

To protect, conserve, enhance and promote our green spaces recognising the importance of them to the identity of the Borough. To work in consultation with residents, users and other interested groups to conserve the natural diversity, visual amenity and historical interest and to promote public access and recreational opportunities.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

2.0 COUNTRYSIDE

3.0 TREES AND WOODLAND

4.0 PARKS

5.0 OPEN SPACES

6.0 CONSERVATION

7.0 ALLOTMENTS

8.0 PUBLIC ACCESS

9.0 OTHER INSTITUTIONAL OR PRIVATE LAND

10.0 STRATEGIC POLICIES

11.0 EDUCATION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The development of a green spaces strategy for the whole of the borough provides the context in which land managers, planners and recreation providers can work to provide this borough with open spaces for the use of the residents and visitors alike. Emphasis in the past has been placed strategically on countryside areas on a regional basis because of the pressures on these areas and particularly the urban fringe. In Surrey over the last few years, a countrywide countryside strategy has been in place, identifying issues and action points. However in the area of parks and other open spaces there has not been the impetus to adopt the strategic and long-term approach this strategy seeks to start the process of addressing the long-term future of all the varied sites within the borough.

Green spaces in the borough are extremely varied in character ranging from the formal gardens at Bourne Hall, through informal green spaces such as that found at Royal Avenue to the wilder areas of Epsom Common. It is clearly very difficult to formulate a policy that is applicable to all of the sites and this strategy does not intend to do so. In addition all of the sites cannot be considered in isolation as residents and other uses are highly mobile and use sites for different purposes. It is clear that the use of the sites is interlinked as many of the sites are also physically linked.

In the past, land use policy was dictated by the local plan policies and these policies, although material in the development of land, were not the primary source of policy. This has recently changed such that the local plan is now given greater strength but has also had to recognise the primary role of the local plan as a land-use strategy. Closer scrutiny is now given to local plans and many of the policies which would have formally given no concerns as non-land use policies now raise issues given the primacy of the plan. Non-land use policies will be rejected. The local plan process timetable has resulted in the present plan needing now to consider the non-land use policies in a different light as a result of a clarification of central government policy. We need to establish these policies in association with the planning system backed by research and evidence as opposed to intuition. This strategic approach starts that process.

It is proposed in the first instance to identify a number of areas for policy development. In essence there are two major areas in the development of the green spaces strategy. There are those policies which refer to features on the ground, for example: land management plans, and then there are those policies which refer to the use of green space such as the play policy. These policies are not mutually exclusive and need to be referenced and considered in the development of the green spaces strategy.

The following strategy should not be considered as being set in tablets of stone. Needs and circumstances change with time and what is relevant now may not be relevant in two years time. This long-term view of the development and management of the green spaces in the borough will help in long-term objective setting for the council and will allow activity to be directed in the most effective way. It should also bring to the fore, issues about the management of the open spaces in the borough which need to be investigated and then resolved. The following strategy is divided into a number of subject areas for convenience, though it should be remembered that in practice many of the areas merge together and issues raised are rarely as simple as they seem.

2.0 COUNTRYSIDE

A large part of Epsom and Ewell is countryside green space and is part of the larger resource of Surrey. The land is not all in the ownership of this council and this has had an impact on the integrated management of the site. Countryside issues and policies have been well developed nationally through the work of the Countryside Commission and English Nature. As a result a good body of research is available which can be used in the local context of Epsom and Ewell. Improvements have been made in the past years with site-specific management plan and policies for sites in the ownership of the council, but there is a need for an overall policy context in which to fit the management of the countryside irrespective of ownership. There is also a need to identify the links between sites both physically and in the overall contribution to the green spaces of the borough.

Issues

- Areas and development pressure for housing and go facilities.
- Inappropriate management either by management as parkland or no management to retain the countryside appeal and value.
- No long-term view of the management of the countryside into the future, recognising each site has a different value.
- No consideration of the relationships between the site and how they contribute to the whole and what physical links are necessary between the sites.
- No priorities for action for the management of the sites.

Action

To identify the different types of countryside in the borough, identifying policies for their overall and site-specific management where appropriate. To prioritise the sites in terms of their value as green spaces in the borough as a whole and to identify potentially damaging activities which would be detrimental to their value. To seek to identify where links and improvements can be made in the countryside of the borough.

3.0 TREES AND WOODLAND

Trees and woodlands, of all the soft landscape features in the borough, play one of the most important roles. The visibility of trees and woodlands and their contribution to the landscape should not be underestimated. Fortunately the borough is in a good position with regard to its tree stocks both in parks, open spaces and highways. Past planting policy has produced a wide range of tree species though there is scope for improvement and development as inappropriate tree planting has taken place. Any policy for trees and woodlands should cover all aspects of the trees and woodland in the borough and show how they relate to our other policies on all areas of land within the borough, whether owned by this Council or not.

Issues

- Loss of trees through a variety of means which includes development and natural processes such as storms and drought.
- Planting inappropriate trees in inappropriate places.
- Poor management of the existing trees resulting in increased cost and liability potential.
- Little recognition of the role of trees in the urban landscape.
- No overall tree planting or landscaping strategy.

Action

To quantify the tree resources of the borough and to draw on this to produce an urban forestry strategy to secure the long-term future and development of the borough's tree stock.

4.0 PARKS

There is a wide range of parks in the Borough which range from formal gardens to sports oriented recreation grounds. Most residents of the borough use the parks on a regular basis for a number of different reasons. In the past the tendency has been to manage parks in isolation without a long term view of their role, the needs of users and their detailed management. In addition it was also felt that the priorities for the development of the parks were unclear. It is now the Council's policy to consider the use of the parks in consultation with the users, to develop long term policies for each park and also to plan for their long term development integrating them with other green spaces as a unit.

- Problems of security and abuse of facilities
- The need to generate income with limited investment in the facilities

Action

To develop an overall policy for the future development of the parks and then to produce individual site management plans. To identify the current provision in parks and the scope for future improvements. To address the problems of youth involvement and provision.

5.0 OPEN SPACES

Open spaces are those areas recognised within the borough, both public and private, which are in addition to our recognised parks, countryside and allotments. They currently play or have the potential to play, an important role in our green space provision. An example of this would be the contribution made by the Longmead Contours to the link between the green areas of Epsom and Ewell. These areas range from informal play space within housing areas to large areas of close mown grass. These are to be considered in this green spaces strategy for the borough as they form an integral part of our green spaces network and are often some of the most frequently used sites.

Issues

- Consideration of the role of the open spaces in part of the overall network of green spaces.
- No long-term management plans for the management of the sites taking restricted account of the needs of users and local residents.
- No overall policy for management of the open spaces as a whole and as part of our green spaces network.
- Problems of security and abuse of the facilities.
- Varied ownership restricting the overview of the open spaces.
- Areas and development pressure for housing and golf facilities.

Action

To establish the role of each of our open spaces for the future development of the green spaces in the borough and develop a long-term management plan working with the local residents, users and the landowner where appropriate.

6.0 CONSERVATION

The need to conserve features within our environment is increasingly recognised by our residents and the users of our green spaces. There has been a dramatic increase in environmental awareness for all parts of our environment over the past few years. As a council we have started to address a number of the issues involved through the borough local plan and through a number of other strategies and policies. We still need to clearly identify conservation policies, place them in context and to implement those that are in place.

Issues

- Loss of some of the natural features of our environment by a variety of different means.
- No policies for the management of anything other than the wildlife features of our green spaces.
- Limited awareness of the conservation interest of many of our sites which includes historical value.
- Limited resources to implement conservation initiatives.
- No plan for environmental improvements to OUI green spaces.

Action

To define policies for the conservation of features within all of our green spaces in consultation with interested groups. To implement those policies with specific actions that will produce results.

7.0 ALLOTMENTS

Allotments serve the need for local residents to grow their own produce whilst at the same time having health and social benefits. The use of allotments has changed over the past years. There were high levels of occupancy after the Second World War and areas which are now Green space were then used as allotments. Usage declined in the 1960's and 1970's, however with a change in people's attitudes and with the adoption of healthier lifestyles the last few years have seen an increase in the demand for plots. The demand for allotments then clearly fluctuates with time and this changing need has to be recognised in the long-term management of allotments. Recently emphasis has been placed on the management of the site by the allotment holders themselves. This is providing real benefits and will continue into the future.

Issues

- Fluctuating levels of occupancy and changing demand for allotments.
- Pressure of the sites for development: as housing.
- Limited past expenditure producing long-term problems such as the accumulation of rubbish.
- No long-term plans for the management of the allotment as a unit and for the future development of each of the allotment.

Action

To devise a policy for the allotments service to form a long-term strategy for their development and to identify management priorities for each of the individual allotment sites.

8.0 PUBLIC ACCESS

For any green spaces strategy to have value to the residents of the borough it is important to recognise that access is particularly important. This may not mean direct access to the site but may involve being able to see the site

from roads and public rights of way and so providing visual amenity. The site may contribute to the overall green space provision of the borough without necessarily being accessible though we should strive to gain access where appropriate. The opportunities for the further development of the rights of way network should be emphasised. Access for the disabled and other groups should not be thought of as an addition to access to our sites but should be automatically considered in new and existing developments.

Issues

- No plan for the development of access to our green spaces.
- Lost opportunities for the enhancement of access to green spaces.
- Opportunities for the promotion of access to green spaces are not fully utilised.
- Increased future potential for improvement in the light of proposed developments.
- The need to provide access to our green spaces for all sectors of the community.

Action

To identify the rights of ways and other forms of access within the borough and to show how they link our various green spaces, facilitate the use of our green spaces and identify areas where we would seek to extend access to our green spaces to form an overall network. To consider access to our green spaces by the disabled and other groups.

9.0 OTHER INSTITUTIONAL OR PRIVATE LAND

in this borough the land owned by this council plays a significant role in the overall development of our green spaces. However this is not the whole picture. If all land which is not owned by the council is ignored then there is little justification for any overall policy context in which to work. This is vital when considering standards for green space provision. There is a need to consider non-council owned sites in this policy but not necessarily on an individual site basis as the response from the landowner may vary.

Issues

- Impending recent changes in the use of large green spaces such as the hospitals Cluster
- Opportunities for the extension or enhancement of our accessible green space may be lost
- Development pressure on this type of green space for housing or other usages.
- The need to identify standards for facilities in green space as a result of the Borough local plan enquiry.

Action

To identify all non-council owned sites and to produce a register identifying features of the green space. To seek to negotiate management of the site that conforms to our overall objectives for the management of green space and, where necessary consider the long-term management of the site.

10.0 STRATEGIC POLICIES

Any strategic policy cannot work in total isolation. We need to consider the effects of national policy for the various activities and features of our green spaces. This is particularly important where we are to consider local standards. The way forward is to look very clearly at our local standards and policies and identify where they differ from those agreed nationally whether formally or informally. Evidence must be provided to justify the local conditions. This has been clearly seen in the inspector's response to the Borough Local Plan Deposit Draft. The play policy is a good example.

Issues

- Lack of policies which can be applied to green space without each issue having to be dealt with on an individual basis
- Management of our green spaces with a wider perspective
- The need to identify policies and standards which will be material in the determination of planning proposals
- The need to work with adjacent landowners, authorities and interested parties.

Action

To carry out an investigation and analysis of all policies and standards which effect the green spaces in the borough and to clearly identify the implications for our own policies. To identify where appropriate further policies as necessary and to consult with interested parties.

11.0 EDUCATION

Green space within the borough is a resource which needs the support and understanding of the local residents if it is to survive. The promotion and interpretation of our green space heritage through educational programmes vital to the continued appropriate use of that green space. Informed debate and an understanding of how green spaces can only be supported by relevant information. We need not only to collect that information but also to inform people of the consequences of their actions and how to act on the result. It is through appreciating what green space resources we have that we will be able to protect those green spaces.

Issues

- Limited educational programme at present
- The need to make the resident and user alike aware of the constraints on the management of green spaces
- The need to respond to the changing needs of our users and to keep them informed of proposed changes

Action

To develop an interpretive plan for all green spaces, both as a unit and individually to identify how we will educate everyone on the importance of green spaces and their management. To implement the plan using the Ranger Service, other officers and outside agencies as appropriate.